

Star Wars

Wizard's RPG Stories

source : <http://www.wizards.com/default.asp?x=starwars/newsarchive>
upload : 10.IV.2006

Jurisdiction

Scenario Supplement for Night's Promise

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For years, Cularin has been a protectorate of neighboring Thaere. But is their dubious presence still needed, or even welcome? To tackle this issue, host Yara Grugara moderates a lively panel discussion that degenerates into insults and violence. This latest supplement to the Living Force campaign ties into the September scenario, Night's Promise, the first part of the "Night Eyes" trilogy.

For years, Cularin has been a protectorate of Thaere, a neighboring system. The absence of any standing military in Cularin made it necessary that someone be appointed to defend its borders, and Thaere (with its sizable Navy) was chosen by the Galactic Senate to fill this role. Over the past two years, Cularin's militia has been growing, and with it has grown a disdain for "protection" from outside the system. Individuals who call Cularin home have begun to wonder what, precisely, Thaere has to gain from this arrangement. Recent increases in patrols, coupled with many (unconfirmed) reports of secret Thaereian bases throughout the system, have led to no small amount of discontent.

Based on the popular outcry, a panel of experts was assembled to discuss issues relating to Thaere, the role its Navy plays in Cularin, and whether Cularin's status as a protectorate should be re-evaluated. The panel invited to the discussion and their affiliations are listed below. Note that each individual will only be identified by name (not affiliation) in the reporting of the dialogue.

Colonel Hyx Modant: Bothan Envoy from the Thaereian Navy

Osten Dal'Nay: Human Commander, Cularin Naval Militia

Sa'arli: Tarasin Aide to Senator Lavina Wren

Minos: Human Jedi Knight, Almas Academy

Sgt. Yadfre: Trandoshan Personnel Liaison, Office of Peace and Security, Gadrin

Yara Grugara: Moderator of the discussion, Cularin Central Broadcasting

The panelists are arrayed around a circular table. Yara sits directly

opposite the holorecorder. She looks determined. Directly to her right is Sa'arli, a female Tarasin with a tattoo of a snakelike lizard whose tail runs from her jawline to up around her ear-slit. To Sa'arli's right is Colonel Modant, in full Thaereian military regalia. Directly on Yara's left is a Human male of middle years wearing Jedi robes. Beside the Jedi is a Trandosha wearing an OPS uniform, and at the far end of the table is Osten Dal'Nay, Commander of the Cularin Militia naval forces. He is notably not wearing his uniform today.

Yara (smiling somewhat nervously at the holorecorder): Welcome, Cularin, to a discussion I'm sure you're all very interested in. That being, a discussion of the role of the Thaereian Navy inside of Cularin. We have a number of - -

Colonel Modant: We can end the discussion before it even starts, young woman. Thaere has a mandate from the Galactic Senate to protect Cularin, and we will continue to do so.

Yara: Of course. Cularin, let me introduce Colonel Hyx Modant of the Thaereian Navy. We asked Admiral Tramsig to be here to talk to us today, but he was too busy, so he sent - - what do you prefer, Colonel? Lackey, toady, errand-boy - - any preference?

Modant: Call me "Sir."

Yara: Uh-huh. Seated next to Sir, we have - -

Modant: Colonel Modant.

Yara: No, you're Colonel Modant. Next to you is Sa'arli, an aide of Senator Wren's.

Modant: No, call me Colonel Modant.

Yara: Sir, you're not the only person on this panel, and you can't monopolize the discussion by constantly changing your mind about what you want to be called. We'll never get to the issue at hand. Now, to my left we have Minos, a Knight at the academy here in Cularin, to his left is Sergeant Yadfre, of the Office of Peace and Security, and at the far end is Osten Dal'Nay. Now, Osten - - can I call you Osten?

Modant: You could call him "traitor".

Osten doesn't so much as look at Modant.

Osten: Osten is fine, thanks.

Yara: Osten, you're the commander of the naval portion of the Cularin Militia. Shouldn't you be in uniform?

Osten: Yara, if I were here as a representative of the militia, I would be. But I'm here as a representative of all the people of Cularin. So no uniform.

Yara: Fascinating. And you know, the shirt you've chosen... Sorry. I used

to do fashion pieces. Force of habit. We're here today to discuss the continued presence of the Thaereian Navy in Cularin. Good, bad, or indifferent?

Osten: Thaere's presence is no longer needed. We have our own militia. We can take care of ourselves. The fact that they're here is just a holdover from a time when we didn't have a militia. The people of Cularin do not need "help" from places like Thaere, especially not when that "help" comes in secret bases and ships hidden in Genarius!

Modant applauds slowly.

Modant: Bravo. Is that all? Because if that's the extent of the argument against Thaere, then I fear there's really no argument to be had. You have a fledgling militia with a handful of ships that's run by a traitor and a Gungan. A Gungan. You couldn't protect yourselves from a mynock with digestive problems.

Osten: Not quite the way I would have characterized you, but not that far off.

Yara: Sir makes an interesting point. Is the militia able to defend Cularin? And does it have to be the only defense available to us? Sergeant Yadfre?

Yadfre: What? Oh, um... well, the thing is, the militia, it seems like a good idea. And there are lots of other things, Cularin has defenses that have been here. Not military as such. OPS is one. I mean, not military. We can do things.

There is a short silence as Yadfre stops, and the others wait to see if he has anything else to say. He doesn't.

Yara: Right. Interesting point. Master Minos?

Minos: I'm not a Master, just a Knight.

Yara: Of course. Should I call you "Sir," too?

Minos: Just Minos, thank you. One "Sir" at the table is enough.

Yara laughs, perhaps a bit too loudly, and smiles broadly at Minos. She looks as though she's flirting with the Jedi Knight.

Minos: The point has been made a number of times of late, throughout the galaxy. The Jedi do not exist to fight wars. We can help to keep the peace, but ultimately, we are a small part of the system.

Modant: And rather impotent to protect even your own, yes? Isn't that something I heard you say, young woman, at a recent funeral?

Minos looks ready to reply, but Yara cuts him off.

Yara: I have apologized for that before. My director asked for a crowd shot, something with people fired up to defend their homes. I suggested, as

part of a much longer speech that never aired, that the Jedi might not be capable of protecting the system - - which by themselves, they certainly aren't, as Knight Minos just pointed out. But the portion of my speech that was made public, where I was seen saying that they are unable to protect anyone, was taken out of context, and I very nearly quit my job over it. I have apologized to the Jedi, and now I make a formal apology to the people of Cularin. I firmly believe that we are lucky to have so many Jedi here in Cularin. And you, Sir...

Minos: May I? Sir, we all become one with the Force, eventually. There is no "protection" from that. What protection the Jedi provide is the protection of freedom, and the protection from tyranny. In many forms, and to the best of our ability.

Modant: I'm not sure what you're doing here, since there is no tyranny or loss of freedom. Even Cularin's own Senator supports Thaere's presence. Isn't that correct?

Sa'arli: It is.

Her face colors, taking on shades of pink and orange, as she speaks. It quickly returns to a neutral green.

Modant: If the Senator supports Thaere, should the people not support Thaere as well?

Osten: Only if the people agree with the Senator. She could be wrong, you know. Summary of the "Night Eyes" Trilogy The "protection" offered by the Thaereians often includes harsh justice - - harsh enough that many citizens of Cularin have become increasingly resentful of the Thaereian presence. Senator Wren, however, maintains that Thaere has her support. Could she possibly know their cruelty?

Modant: Ah, but she isn't, and if she were, would it matter? We're here. Only the direct intervention of the Senate can revoke our protective charter.

Sa'arli: Technically, that's not true.

Modant turns and glares at her. She ignores him.

Yara: Oh? Do tell.

Sa'arli: A Senatorial protectorate only retains that status so long as certain conditions are met. For instance, the protecting agency must be loyal to the Senate and the Supreme Chancellor.

Modant: We are! Unequivocally.

Sa'arli: Of course. In addition, the process of life in the protected system cannot be disrupted by the protecting agency.

Osten: You mean by doing things like kidnapping Cularin citizens and selling them into slavery?

Modant: I have no idea what you're talking about.

Osten: How about killing Cularin citizens?

Modant: Cularin citizens kill one another every day. Seems to be something of a sport for you. If Cularin citizens were to attack duly-appointed protectors, we would defend ourselves. We wouldn't be doing anything you don't do to your own.

Sa'arli: Would you two please take your egos and go outside, if you can't be quiet?

Minos chuckles. Yara smiles. Yadfre looks like he's going to vomit or pass out, or both.

Yara: Is that all?

Sa'arli: No. The system can petition the Senate to revoke its protected status. However, this will be successful only with the support of that system's Senator - -

Modant: Which you don't have, because Senator Wren supports Thaere. She knows it's what's best for the system. Isn't that true?

Sa'arli takes several long breaths before responding, and hints of color dart along the edges of her tattoo. When she speaks, the words are precise.

Sa'arli: Senator Wren supports the continued status of Thaere as a protector of Cularin.

Yara: That does make things difficult, doesn't it? Osten, thoughts?

Osten: If all we have to do is show that Thaere is disrupting life in Cularin to get these sadists out of our homes, then it's as good as done.

Modant: You have no proof of anything.

Osten: That you know of...

Modant shakes his head and looks at Yara.

Modant: This is the best you can do? I thought this was going to be a reasonable, rational dialogue, and I get name-calling?

Yara: That's not name-calling, Sir. Name calling would be... well...

Osten: Evil monkey-lizards whose parents bred with banthas?

Yara: That would be name-calling, yes.

Modant: Young woman, are you trying to create a diplomatic incident?

Sa'arli: I'm sure she isn't, since any diplomatic incident that involved someone like yourself might well bring the attention of the Senate on Thaere's activities and the ongoing situation in Cularin, distracting them from the Clone Wars. Is that accurate, Yara?

Yara: Um... Minos?

Minos: Stranger things have happened. Look -- Colonel, would you sit down? -- things are as they are. If some among us feel that Thaere has overstepped its bounds, our Tarasin friend has provided us with a means of beginning the process of removing your navy. Barring that, the people of Cularin can petition their Senator to change her stance and have Thaere's protective charter revoked.

Modant: She won't do it.

He almost sneers as he says the words, then rises.

Modant: I've had enough of this nerf-herding. It's clear that you're all a bunch of malcontents with no shred of respect for the individuals who have protected your borders.

Osten: By blocking trade, seizing cargo, and conducting illegal searches?

Modant: More name-calling and unsupportable accusations.

Osten: Oh?

The viewscreen on the wall behind Yara springs to life. A Thaereian boarding party has just made its way aboard a cruiser of some kind, led by none other than Colonel Modant himself. Modant gestures to his soldiers, who begin to confiscate cargo as the owners of the ship, a pair of young Humans, protest.

Modant: A preposterous forgery.

He raises his blaster pistol and fires, and the screen explodes. The lights flicker, and when they come back on, Modant is gone and everyone else is still seated at the table -- slightly singed, in some cases, but otherwise fine.

Yara: Well, that was enlightening. Does that qualify as a "diplomatic incident"? I can't tell. Any final comments? Osten?

Osten: "Thaere: If we don't like what we see, we shoot it."

Yara: Interesting. Sa'arli?

Sa'arli: I'm certain Senator Wren will hear of this, if she hasn't already. It doesn't change her position, though. Until such time as the militia is more firmly established, Cularin continues to need protection.

Yara: Courtesy of Thaere, or from Thaere? No, sorry. Forget I asked. Sergeant Yadfre?

Yadfre: Um... er...

He leans over, out of view of the holorecorder, and heaves up his lunch.

Yara: You said a mouthful. And then some. Minos?

Minos: I'm certain the entire system, and much of the galaxy, will have found this dialogue to be of interest. It seems that Admiral Tramsig might have sent a better representative to speak on behalf of Thaere.

Yara: Of course. Well, thank you all for being here, and special thanks to Sir, of the Thaereian Navy. We'll be sending him a bill. Now, if any of you would like to write to Senator Wren, the staff of the Almas Academy, or the Cularin Militia, or if you would like to make a donation to any of their coffers, here is their contact information.

A series of numbers flashes across the screen.

Yara: And if you'd like to let Colonel Modant know what you thought of him, his private comlink number is - -